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NSA, CCMR Faculty Collaborate at ISA Convention

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By Kate Lamar

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Faculty from the National Security Affairs Department (NSA) and the Center for Civil Military Relations (CCMR) recently partnered together on a number of academic panels at the 51st Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA) held in New Orleans on February 16 -20, 2010. In total, sixteen faculty members from the School of International Graduate Studies (SIGS) participated in the convention, including the Dean of SIGS, Dr. Jim Wirtz.

The ISA is a scholarly organization that is dedicated to exploring international studies. The ISA hosts international conferences and annual conventions each year that draw scholars from across the globe.

"The ISA Annual Convention is of particular value to NSA faculty because, as its name implies, it is international not only in focus but in participation," said Prof. Bob Springborg of the NSA department, who participated in several panel discussion at the convention. "The subjects it addresses are therefore of global concern or at least cast within a global framework."

This year's theme for the ISA Convention was, *Theory vs. Policy? Connecting Scholars and Practitioners*.

"The theme was timely given the grave policy challenges facing the United States and our allies today," said retired Navy Capt. Timothy Doorey, a faculty member with the CCMR. "Many in government and academia are questioning the policy relevance of much of the scholarship coming out of the social sciences. Unlike many universities, NPS has never veered far from 'policy relevant' research and education."

The variety of panels offered at the convention highlighted topics covering the vast scope of international studies. In particular, those focusing on intelligence captured the interest of NSA and CCMR faculty members and leaders within the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and other NATO allies' intelligence agencies, said Doorey.

"Cyber-security and possible cyber-terrorism were top agenda items for many of the intelligence panels at the conference. Various academics and officials discussed the legal, organizational and technical challenges facing the Obama administration and our allies as they try to enhance the security of our cyber critical infrastructure," said Doorey.

The NPS faculty who attended the convention took advantage of the opportunity it presented to network with academicians and practitioners from other institutions and agencies.

"Attending this type of conference helps build collaborative relationships between faculty members at SIGS and other universities around the world who can then work together on future research endeavors and publications," said Cristiana Matei, a faculty member with CCMR who hosted a panel that included faculty from NSA, CCMR and other international universities. "I think there will be several projects and publication opportunities that will come out of the panels we hosted."

"Collaborating with other academics from U.S. and international institutions helps foster academic debate and discussion," said Rich Hoffman, Director of the CCMR. "This is a critical part of academic life for faculty at CCMR. It generates creativity in research, which leads to innovation in our programs and thus better educational experiences for our participants."

These opportunities to network with other U.S. and international agencies and universities are important for faculty members and academic life at NPS, said the Dean of SIGS, Jim Wirtz.

"Partnership building and innovative research are an integral part of the SIGS mission," said Wirtz. "The academic camaraderie on display at the ISA convention is something we strive to achieve everyday at NPS. It's part of what makes our university such a success."